

family; \$200,000 of this is to go to the Qaddafi Development Foundation for assisting indigenous NGOs identify potential for reform. Reform in Libya? You have got to be kidding. This foundation is not a nongovernment organization. It has direct links to Libyan Government and is actually run by the son of Qaddafi. For those of who don't know Qaddafi's second oldest son, he is the one who personally escorted the man responsible for the tragedy of Pan Am Flight 103 from Scotland upon his release back to Libya on his father's personal jet.

The foundation run by Qaddafi's second oldest son is the very group that was used by the Libyan regime to channel funds to compensate American victims of Libyan-sponsored attacks, including victims of Pan Am Flight 103. State Department funding for this foundation may, in fact, serve as a backdoor replenishment of funds used by Libya to compensate our victims of Libyan-sponsored attacks.

Turning to a separate \$200,000 slush fund proposed under the heading of "Inclusive Economic Law and Property Rights: Promoting Women's Economic Opportunities," the State Department has indicated that the anticipated implementing partners will be the United Nations Development Programme and an organization run by Qaddafi's daughter. Qaddafi's daughter also serves as the UNDP's goodwill ambassador to Libya, so she gets two opportunities to directly benefit from U.S. Government programs in Libya at our taxpayers' expense.

The role of the United Nation Development Programme is very disturbing. It has been the center of several major corruption scandals in recent years. It reportedly cannot account for millions of American dollars that it received in Afghanistan. It also allegedly funneled hard currency to the North Korean regime while Kim Jong Il was consolidating his nuclear program. UNDP then retaliated against the whistleblower who uncovered this wrongdoing.

So I ask you, was funding for the Qaddafi family and a notoriously unaccountable UNDP what Congress had in mind when it appropriated funds to support what they call promotion of democracy and human rights in Libya? Oh, my gosh. Absolutely not.

Unfortunately, the Libya aid program presents just one more example of the need for broad, comprehensive reform of the United States foreign assistance program. Our U.S. foreign assistance can go a long way in improving people's lives while promoting our most cherished ideals of freedom and human rights. However, when administered poorly where unaccounted foreign governments, international organizations and bureaucrats are the beneficiaries, then our foreign aid programs only serve to undermine our very own interests.

It is time for us to get serious about reforming our foreign aid system and about effectively vetting our programs and partners.

Toward this end, Madam Speaker, I have proposed two separate pieces of legislation: H.R. 1062, the Foreign Assistance Partner Vetting Act, and H.R. 557, the United Nation's Transparency, Accountability, and Reform Act, and I hope that we can get those bills heard forthwith.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. INGLIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. INGLIS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

NO GOVERNMENT OPTION

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Let me just say as an extension of what we were discussing a few minutes ago, the other body, the Senate today twice voted down in the Senate Finance Committee the government option because they know the American people, by a large majority, does not want the government interfering in health care and sticking their nose in between a doctor and a patient. That was done in the U.S. Senate today.

And I would just like to say one more thing—this won't take a whole minute—and that is seniors of this country, and I've talked to a lot of them, they know that they're going to be taking between \$500 and \$600 billion out of Medicare and Medicare Advantage over the next decade, which is going to cause the Medicare program to be in worse shape than it is already. And the program they're talking about is going to result in rationing. It is going to result in problems for seniors, and the seniors know it.

I would just like to end by saying this to my Democrat colleagues: They all vote.

□ 1945

HEALTH CARE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. INGLIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. INGLIS. Madam Speaker, the gentleman just before me was speaking about the public option. And I, like him, am happy that the Senate Finance Committee has turned down the public option. But I don't think the snake is dead yet here on the House floor because it seems that the Speaker is working over the CBO numbers in trying to persuade some folks there is some \$85 billion worth of savings if we just set the reimbursement rate at 5 percent above Medicare.

Well, let's think that through. Here is what we've got. We've already got

two public programs that under-reimburse providers. In fact, for hospitalizations, Medicaid, which is a Federal and State program, reimburses typically at 87 percent of actual cost for hospitalizations. Medicare reimburses at 92 percent of actual cost. So if you go 5 percent higher than Medicare, if I'm doing the math right, it means that maybe the new public option would reimburse maybe 93, 94 percent of actual cost, which means that you have got a 13 percent cost shift in Medicaid, a 7 percent cost shift in Medicare; and now if a public option comes to be, a 6 percent or so cost shift there. The result is that private payers have to pay 129 percent of actual cost, on average, when they go into the hospital. Now that's a problem because if it's 129 percent of actual cost, it means that premiums go up.

So the public option, far from solving the problem of cost shift, actually is going to add to the problem of cost shift by giving us a third Federal program that adds to the problem. So it's clear that this is not a solution, and the \$85 billion worth of savings is not a real savings. It's a savings only if you can go pull money out of the pocket of anybody that walks into the hospital with an insurance card in their pocket, because again, they pay 129 percent of actual costs.

So somehow what we have to do here in this health care reform business is figure out how to stop that cost shift, how to be accountable here at the Federal Government so that we're not paying just 87 percent of actual cost for Medicaid patients, not just paying 92 percent of actual costs for Medicare patients, and certainly not creating a third program that will under-reimburse hospitals.

So our challenge, the challenge before us, is to figure out how to stop the cost shift and how to be accountable from here in Washington, from our State capitals, and surely not to create a public option that just adds to the problem.

HONORING VICTOR ASHE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, I had the privilege of going earlier today to the flag ceremony at the State Department for Victor Ashe who is retiring as our ambassador to Poland. Victor Ashe is a longtime friend of mine, and in fact, we roomed together in San Francisco where we were attending the 1964 Republican National Convention. I was between my junior and senior years in high school and at the time was an honorary assistant sergeant at arms at the convention. I don't suppose you can get any lower than being an honorary assistant, but it got me in the door. And Victor that summer had just completed his first year at Yale, and I'm sure had a much more important position.

In the years since then, Victor Ashe has had one of the most distinguished careers of anyone from our State. He was elected to the Tennessee State House at the age of 21, the minimum age for service in that body. He began his service in the Tennessee State Senate at the age of 30, also the minimum age required. He was the Republican nominee for the U.S. Senate and then spent a year and a half as the executive director of the President's Commission on Americans Outdoors.

In 1987, he was elected as mayor of Knoxville, eventually serving for 16 years and becoming the longest-serving mayor in the city's history. In that position, he achieved national recognition by being named president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

Five years ago, President George W. Bush named Victor Ashe as our Ambassador to Poland, where he served longer than any other U.S. ambassador to that country. Political appointees usually become our very best ambassadors, and that was certainly true in the case of Victor Ashe. He visited approximately 200 villages, towns and cities in Poland, covering almost every nook and cranny of that country. He hosted receptions and parties for over 28,000 people and had 320 overnight guests at the ambassador's residence. Showing that he never forgot where he came from, most of his overnight guests were from the Knoxville area.

I had the privilege of leading a congressional delegation of 11 Members to Poland; and Ambassador Ashe and his wife, Joan, went far above and beyond the call of duty in hosting us at that time. In addition, I had several Members of Congress who had met him on other trips, and they always came back singing the praises of our great ambassador.

I have met many U.S. ambassadors and ambassadors from other countries during my time in Congress. I have never met, heard of, or read about anyone who has worked as hard or has spent as much time going around the country getting to know people from all walks of life. I want to commend Victor Ashe for all his service to the people of Tennessee in the State house and senate and as mayor of Knoxville. But tonight I especially want to salute him for his great service as the 24th U.S. Ambassador to one of our strongest allies, the nation of Poland.

Having summed up his distinguished career thus far, I also want to commend him for continuing to advocate good things for our Nations.

James Morrison, a friend of mine, writes the "Embassy Row" column for the Washington Times. This past Friday, most of his column was about the farewell message Victor Ashe posted on the Web site of the U.S. embassy in Poland. In that message, Ambassador Ashe criticized the construction of "fortress-like" American embassies throughout the world. He pointed out that these fortresses have been built even in countries where Americans face little danger of terrorist attacks.

Going ridiculously overboard on security causes two very serious problems. One, it sends an unfriendly message from our diplomats, who are supposed to be trying to make friends; and, two, it has cost U.S. taxpayers many unnecessary billions all over the world. Ambassador Ashe wrote: "The design of many of these buildings quite often creates a fortress-like atmosphere, and the impression given to host nations can be less than friendly, not the warm, welcoming impression we should offer as Americans."

He complained that the State Department is imposing security requirements and design elements for all new U.S. embassies, regardless of the threat posed in more peaceful nations. "Given different security situations in virtually every nation, wide flexibility in construction design and location is needed, as opposed to the one-size-fits-all approach," Mr. Ashe said. "As such, different sites and designs can be adopted at less cost and with greater architectural warmth."

I agree with Victor Ashe and congratulate him on his outstanding service to our country.

HONORING THE LIFE AND WORKS OF SENATOR EDWARD M. KENNEDY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MARKEY of Massachusetts. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. MARKEY of Massachusetts. I say that while noting that Representative NEAL from Massachusetts and Representative CAPUANO from Massachusetts want to, at this point, insert their written statements in honor of Senator Kennedy, and that is why I made that unanimous consent request. But it is also for the purpose of any other Member seeking to be recognized to be able to insert their comments at this point.

We rise to honor our friend and our mentor, Senator Edward M. Kennedy, one of the greatest Senators in the history of the United States. He will be on a very short list of the greatest who have ever lived and served our country. We tonight gather, noting that his son, PATRICK, serves with us here in the House of Representatives, and we extend our best to him and to his sister, Kara, and to Teddy, Jr., as well as and especially to his beloved wife, Vicky, and to all of the other members of the Kennedy family.

He was, without question, "an idealist without illusions," in the words of

his brother. He worked as best he could to achieve the goals that he set for our country while at the same time reaching across the aisle to find partners that he could work with in order to accomplish those legislative goals. Without question, it was our great honor, as the Massachusetts delegation, to work with him for all of those years.

Let me, at this point, turn and recognize the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK), and then we will go through and recognize the other members of our delegation and other Members who have joined here to speak about the Senator. I recognize the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, the gentleman who just recognized me, the dean of our delegation, has the distinction of having worked very closely with the late Senator Kennedy for 33 years, for more than two-thirds of the Senator's term. And I know that Senator Kennedy greatly valued his colleagueship, as all of us do who serve with him as the dean, and his work now in a number of the areas pays tribute. I do think it is important to note that the longer you worked with Senator Kennedy, the more you came to admire what he did.

I would have one difference with my colleague with whom I rarely differ on things. He said Senator Kennedy would be seen as one of the greatest Senators. I would say the best. And I know my colleague is gracious and may have a Senator or two he needs on the cap-and-trade bill, so he doesn't want to go too far. But I think we would all agree.

I was a fledging academic before I went into politics. I was studying for a Ph.D., and I then learned I had a personal characteristic which was a defect in academics but absolutely essential to serve in this body. I have a very short attention span. And it works to my advantage here and to my disadvantage in serious scholarship. But from both ends, I don't think there is much question about his greatness as a Senator.

Obviously, those of us in the delegation and our great colleague and civil rights leader, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) who has worked with Senator Kennedy, goes back even before any of the rest of us in terms of colleagueship; but we obviously agreed with his values, and that is a big part of it. But even those who didn't, and this is what's so striking and so needed in our country today, many Members of Congress who served with him who disagreed with him on most substantive issues, joined in the praise for his integrity and his character and his dedication.

We are at a time now where politics is held in low repute by a lot of young people. I would hope that younger people in particular would think back to the deep, deep love for Senator Kennedy that was expressed by so many people across the political spectrum. Think about the accomplishments to which so many people attribute; think